



FRIENDS OF THE EARTH 72 JANE STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10014

September 27, 1976

Mr. Robert Ubell, Editor
THE SCIENCES
New York Academy of Sciences
2 East 63 Street
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Mr. Ubell:

So that your readers may be properly and fairly informed regarding the recombinant DNA controversy, it is important that The Sciences present and correct, in adequately prominent format, the following cited omissions and error (Volume 16, No. 5 September/October 1976).

The omission concerns the printed letter of Dr. Joshua Lederberg ^{as a Nobel Laureate}, who is described only by name, and by affiliation with Stanford University Medical School, thus implying that his views are those of an ^{honored} scientist. In fact, however, Dr. Lederberg is connected with the Caltech Corporation of California, a company set up to utilize recombinant DNA technology for large-scale production of micro-organisms for industrial use.

Furthermore, also without public disclosure of any commercial self-interest in the development of recombinant DNA research, Dr. Lederberg served on the Advisory Committee to the World Health Organization of the United Nations. In June, 1975, at the height of the hotly-contested public controversy, this Advisory Committee issued a declaration, in which Dr. Lederberg participated, supporting the advancement of recombinant DNA research.

In addition, Dr. Lederberg aided in the development of the National Institutes of Health guidelines for the United States Government without disclosing this personal, commercial interest in advancing recombinant DNA research, which less stringent guidelines would favor.

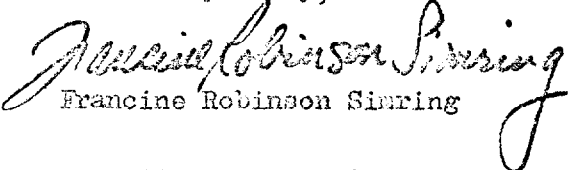
Every citizen, scientist or no, has the right to have commercial ties. However, these ties must be openly declared to avoid planned or inadvertent deception of the public; and no advisory or developmental role with respect

ment may be accepted, thus avoiding a conflict of interest.

The error in need of correction occurs in the editorial (p. 1) which states, "The moratorium ended on June 28 when the NEH issued Guidelines specifying exactly under what conditions genetic engineering may be performed." The voluntary, international 18-month moratorium on recombinant DNA research of the most hazardous levels, which Dr. Paul Berg and associates called for in July, 1974, lasted only for seven months. For in February of 1975, a majority of the scientists at the Asilomar Conference voted to end the moratorium.

The guidelines were issued on June 23, 1976 without the required Environmental Impact Statement, thus offering to those already at work, government sanction and subsidy; and thus depriving the public of its mandated participation in open, ongoing evaluation of the alleged benefits and risks of this hazardous technology and its policy formulation.

Yours very truly,


Francine Robinson Sinner

Committee for Genetics

FRS:fh

CC: Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci, Cambridge, Mass.
Mr. Daniel Hayes, Chairman
Cambridge Laboratory Experimentation Review Board